तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Highlights

• **Going to Vrindavan**
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• **Research Nabadwip Dham**
Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

• **Nitai and the Giant Cobra**
Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• **The Beautiful Nityananda Rama**
Srila Narahari Chakravarti's* Bhakti-ratnakara *12.4018-4021

• **The Glories of Nitai**
Srila Murari Gupta's* Caitanya-carita Mahākavya *1.4.13-15

Going to Vrindavan

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Unless one is favored by Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda there is no need to go to Vrindavan, for unless one's mind is purified he cannot see Vrindavan, even if he goes there. Actually going to Vrindavan involves taking shelter of the Six Goswamis by reading the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Vidagdha-mādhava*, *Lalita-mādhava* and the other books that they have given. In this way one can understand the transcendental loving affairs between Radha and Krishna. *kabe hāma bujhaba se yugala-pirīti*. The conjugal love between Radha and Krishna is not an ordinary human affair; it is fully transcendental. In order to understand Radha and Krishna, to worship them and engage in their loving service, one must be guided by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and the Six Goswamis, Lord Chaitanya's direct disciples. ✿

— Purport to *Cc. ādi* 8.31

Research Nabadwip Dham

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

O devotees! Give up other desires and thoughts for now and try to discover the lost places of this great *tīrtha*. Your research will not be as difficult as the research undertaken by astrologers like Bhaskaracharya and Aryabhatta. They were mundane scholars. Therefore, while researching material subjects, they were forced to undergo various difficulties, such as inventing many material machines. O devotees who are mad after Nityananda! You do not belong to this world. If you wish, you can easily do everything. If you only once fall at the lotus feet of Lord Nityananda and pray, you can obtain the transcendental abode of Svetadwip, just as you can get a myrobalan fruit in your hand. If you cry while rolling on the surface of Panca-tattva's spiritual abode and exclaim, "O Gauranga! O Vishnupriya! O Lord Nityananda! O Lord Advaita! O Gadadhara! O Srinivasa!" then Sri Panca-tattva will mercifully show you all the places. O *vaiṣṇavas*! Do not wait any longer. (*Viṣṇupriyā Pallī* magazine, vol. 1) ✿

— *Śrī Bhaktivinoda Vāṇī Vaibhava*. Compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Sri Bhumipati Das. Published by Sri Iswara Das and Touchstone Media. Vrindavan..2002.

Nitai and the Giant Cobra

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Today we observe the holy appearance day of *patita-pāvana* Sri Nityananda Prabhu, whose

next column ☞

mercy is limitless. Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur has sung, *nitāi amar dayāra avadhi*. "*Avadhi*" means limit. If there is any limit, then Nitai's mercy is the last limit. There is no mercy greater than it. If you get the mercy of Nitai then who can estimate what will happen to you? If someone is ill fated, he has such bad luck that he cannot do *bhajan* of Nitai, then what is his position? *nitāi nā bolilo mukhe, majilo saṁsāra-sukhe* — If one is not uttering the name of Nitai, if he is not begging for the mercy of Nitai, not serving Nitai, then he is engaged in this *saṁsāra-sukha* — material enjoyment. Then, *sei paśu baḍa durācāra* — he is a *paśu*, an stool-eating animal [from Srila Narottama Das Thakur's "*Nitāi-pada-kamala*"].

From Dvapara Yuga

I offer my obeisances to that Nityananda Rama. Nityananda is *ananta*, unlimited. In his *bala-līlā*, boyhood pastimes, his father's name was Hadai Ojha and his mother's name was Padmavati. The name of the village he appeared in is Ekachakra Gram. If you go to Nabadwip you may visit there. A few years after Nityananda's birth another son was born to Hadai Ojha and Padmavati whom they called Banka Ray. Banka means crooked in three places, *śyāmasundara tri-bhanga lalita*. Raya means Radharani. Banka Ray means Shyamasundara and Radharani mixed. Shyam and Radharani mixed are Gaura. In their boyhood days these two brothers played in the village of Ekachakra. There is a river that flows close to that village called the Yamunanadi. In their boyhood days they were performing various *līlās*, *kṛṣṇa-līlās* and *rāma-līlās*.

One day these two brothers went to Mayureshwar, the place of their maternal grandfather, and were about to enter into a jungle situated close to the village. Some villagers said, "Don't go there. In that jungle is a very great venomous cobra. Anyone who goes there never returns. The cobra devours him." Nityananda didn't listen, and the two brothers entered the jungle. There they came across that great cobra staying underneath a tamal tree. Raising his hood and hissing, he came out. But Nityananda was not at all disturbed or afraid. He raised his hand and said, "Hey, stupid rascal! Stay right there! Who are you? Why are you persecuting innocent animals and human beings?" Nityananda Prabhu is himself Nagaraj Ananta, the king of all snakes. So when he said to stop, that great cobra stopped. Then the snake related his history from *Dvāpara yuga*.

Pandavas in Ekachakra

The eldest son of Dhritarashtra, Duryodhana, was a very crooked person. He had a house made of lac, and somehow he got the five Pandava brothers and their mother inside with the intention to burn them to ashes. But *kṛṣṇa-rakṣati*, Krishna protected them and they escaped unhurt. The Pandavas were *kṣatriyas*, but at that time they disguised themselves as *brāhmaṇas* and were wandering about. They came to the village of Ekachakra and were staying with their mother Kunti in the house of a poor *brāhmaṇa* named Vedashray.

The *Mahābharata* mentions that at first the Pandavas were staying at a place near Ekachakra. That place still exists today and is called Pandavatala. Vyasadev met the Pandavas there. He told them to stay for one month in Ekachakra in the house of the *brāhmaṇa* Vedashray. Although Vedashray was a poor *brāhmaṇa*, he spared half of his house for the Pandavas, while in the other half he, his wife, their son and daughter stayed. He was very poor. Every day he would go out and beg alms. He had nothing in his house.

Some demons were coming to the village and creating disturbances, eating human beings and animals. One such demon named Bakasura [not to be confused with the demon Krishna killed in Vraja] was terrorizing everyone in the village. To stop his unexpected random attacks on the innocent people and animals, they offered to each day give him one human being and a quantity of food. In this way he would not be troubled trying to find his meal. In exchange he agreed not to attack any of the villagers or their animals. To provide for Bakasura's means, the villagers would each take turns providing him one human being and a quantity of food. There were so many people in the village that each home would only have to pay this tribute once in many years. There was a schedule worked out as to who would have to go, and the village drummer would daily announce whose turn had come to feed Bakasura.

While the Pandavas were staying there disguised as *brāhmaṇas*, four of them would go out every day to collect alms, while the fifth one would stay at home with mother Kunti. One day, Bhima was staying back with his mother. On that day the village drummer came, beat his drum, and proclaimed, "Tomorrow the turn of Vedashray *brāhmaṇa* has come for *bakāsura-pāli*, he'll go to Bakasura." When they heard

this, the *brāhmaṇa* and his wife felt great anxiety. They had nothing in their house. So how could they arrange to feed this demon? Somehow the *brāhmaṇa* got something from his begging, and his wife went to her father's house and collected something. So they had enough for Bakasura's food. But the problem was that one human being had to be sent to Bakasura to eat. Who would go? There were four persons in the family. The *brāhmaṇa* and his *brāhmaṇi* wife, a ten-year-old son whose name was Vidyadhar, and an eight-year-old daughter named Bhanumati. The *brāhmaṇa* said, "I'll go."

When he said this, his son Vidyadhar said, "No, no. I'll go." When the son said this, they all cried.

Hearing the sound of crying, Kunti ran there and asked them, "What has happened to you? Why are you crying?" They told her everything. Kunti understood, so she said, "Don't worry. You have only one son, but I have five sons. I'll send one. I'll send my son Bhima to him." Kunti knew how strong Bhima was, how Bhima could easily kill the demon. "Don't worry," she said. "You have helped us in a time of misfortune, so now in your time of distress I must help you." Kunti called her son and said, "Bhima, they are crying because their son wants to go for the food of the demon Bakasura. He should not go. You go. They helped us when we were in calamity. Now in their moment of danger we must help them."

Bhima became very happy and said, "All right, I'll go."

Killing Bakasura

The food arranged for Bakasura was a huge amount. It consisted of 5,120 mounds of cooked rice, one cartload of a cake called *maṇḍā-piṭhā*, one pair of buffalo pulling the cart, and one human being. Bhima said, "Very nice food for me today! Such a large amount of rice and a cartload of *maṇḍā-piṭhā*. Finally I will have enough to eat! I will eat all this and kill the demon." Bhima was very happy. He rode on the cart eating the *maṇḍā-piṭhā*, calling out, "*He duṣṭa rākṣasa*, stupid rascal! Come out, come out!" Bakasura came and saw that someone was eating his food and calling him names. He thought, "Who is this?" Bakasura uprooted some big trees and threw them at Bhima. Then Bhima did the same, uprooting big trees and throwing them back. There was very fierce fighting and at last Bhima killed the demon. Then he prepared to return to his mother.

In the meantime, Arjuna came back from begging and saw that Bhima wasn't there. He asked, "Mother, where is brother Bhima?" Mother Kunti told him everything, how Bhima had gone to Bakasura. Arjuna thought, "Brother Bhima will be fighting alone with the demon. He may be facing trouble. I must go and help him." He told mother Kunti, "You please stay. The other brothers are coming within a short time. I'm going to help Bhima. Seeing the marks of the cart wheels, Arjuna started up the road. Halfway there he thought, "It's going to take time to get there, Bhima is facing great trouble, so what shall I do?" Thinking like this, he decided to shoot his *nāga-pāśa-astra* — snake arrow. He told the snake, "You go and bind up that demon Bakasura." Arjuna then continued, and on the way he met Bhima and heard from him that the demon was already killed. Arjuna told him, "You go back to mother. I have sent this cobra arrow and the snake may be moving about there. He may bite someone and create some disturbance. I am going to settle him up." Arjuna went there, saw the snake, and said, "All right, cobra. You stay here underneath this tamal tree." The cobra said, "Very well, I'll stay here. But how can I survive? What will be my food? Make some arrangement for me to eat." Arjuna said, "Don't leave this tamal tree. If by chance someone comes to you, you can devour him. But don't go out and bother anyone."

The cobra told Nitai, "I have been following Arjuna's instruction in that way ever since."

Nitai instructed him, "You should not do this anymore. You are killing innocent animals and human beings. This is not good. Stay in this hole and don't come out. Remain inside there under this tamal tree. Don't hurt anyone."

The cobra said, "How can I survive? What will I eat?"

Nityananda said, "People will come to offer worship to you. They will offer so much food to you." Obeying the order of Nityananda Prabhu, that great cobra remained inside the hole.

Then Nityananda Prabhu took off one of his earrings and put it over the opening of that hole, covering it. So from that day, Nityananda Prabhu has only one earring, *eka kuṇḍala*. Not two. The earring he placed over the hole gradually increased in size. Now it has turned into a big block of stone and people have built a small temple over it. That place is still there, and it is known as *kuṇḍala-tala*. People go there, worship the cobra, and offer him much food.

The Beautiful Nityananda Rama

Srila Narahari Chakravarti's

Bhakti-ratnakara *12.4018-4021*

kāmoda-rāga

prabhu nityānanda rāma rūpe guṇe anupāma
padmāvatī-garbhe janamilā
nija gaṇa laiyā saṅge dvādaśa vatsara raṅge
śrī-ekacakrāya vilasilā

Lord Nityananda Rama, whose virtues and handsomeness are without peer, took birth from Padmavati's womb. For twelve years, he enjoyed pastimes of playing with his childhood friends in the village of Ekachakra.

gorā avatīrṇa haile sannyāsīra saṅga chale
bāhira ha-ila ghara haite
tīrtha paryaṭana ka're viṁśati vatsara pare
ānande ā-ilā nadīyāte

When Lord Gaura descended to this world, Lord Nityananda, on the pretext of accompanying a *sannyāsī*, left home. He traveled to many holy places. Then, after twenty years, he joyfully entered Nadiya.

pā'yā prāṇa gorācāṅde paḍi se premera phānde
daṇḍa kamaṇḍalu phele dūre
sadā māti' saṅkīrtane kṣetre cale prabhu-sane
prabhu daṇḍa tina khaṇḍa kare

Lord Gaurachandra was his very life. He fell into the trap Lord Gaurachandra had set, the trap of ecstatic spiritual love. The *daṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu* he threw far away. His heart was always in *saṅkīrtana*. He accompanied Mahaprabhu on the journey to Jagannath Kshetra, and broke Mahaprabhu's *daṇḍa* into three pieces.

prabhura ādeśa mate gauḍe āsi' kṣetra haite
prabhu-mano-hita karma kailā
dāsa narahari gati vasu jāhnavāra pati
yā're tā're prema bilāilā

On Lord Gaurachandra's command He left Jagannath Kshetra and returned to Gauda-desh. He strove to satisfy the desire in Lord Gaurachandra's heart. He freely gave away the gift of ecstatic spiritual love. He is Jahnava's and Vasudha's husband and Narahari Das' shelter.

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The Glories of Nitai

Srila Murari Gupta's

Caitanya-carita Mahākavya *1.4.13-15*

avadhūto mahā-tejā nityānando mahattamaḥ
baladevāṁśato jāto mahā-yogī svayaṁ prabhuḥ

Sri Nityananda Prabhu is the plenary portion of Baladev. Although the greatest of the great, he appears as an *avadhūta* and a great mystic. Actually, however, he is the Supreme Lord himself, the origin of all emanations.

na tasya kula-śīlāni karmāṇi vaktum utsahe
api varṣa-śatenāpi bṛhaspatir api svayam

Even Brihaspati himself with a hundred years at his disposal could hardly attempt to describe Sri Nityananda's character and activities.

vaktuṁ neśe 'pare kiṁvā vayaṁ hi kṣudra-jantavaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-dvitīyaś cāpi gaurāṅga-prāṇa-vallabhaḥ

If such a great personality is unable to describe the qualities of Lord Nityananda, then what to speak of an insignificant living beings such as ourselves? He is second only to Sri Krishna, and is more dear to Lord Gauranga than his own life-breath.

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